

**Remarks**  
**Ambassador D. Brent Hardt**  
**Inauguration of Coaches Training Workshop**  
**Skills and Knowledge for Youth Employment Project**  
**Monday, July 9, 2012, 9:00 am**  
**The Regency Suites**

Hon. Clement Rohee, Minister of Home Affairs

Hon. Jennifer Webster, Minister of Human Services

Hon. Priya Manichand, Minister of Education

Hon. Frank Anthony, Minister of Culture, Youth and Sports

Representatives of the Media

Friends All

On behalf of the United States Government and the United States Agency for International Development (USAID), I am very pleased to be a part of this inauguration of the Skills and Knowledge for Youth Employment Coaches Training Workshop. This workshop is a vital element in implementing this project, which is a core element of President Obama's Caribbean Basin Security Initiative (CBSI). By training a competent coaching corps, this workshop will ensure that the

SKYE program will have the personnel with the essential skills needed to assist at-risk youth in finding sustainable employment opportunities. This, in turn, will allow young people to join the labor force and contribute to Guyana's economic growth. Through this USAID SKYE project, the United States is joining forces with the Government of Guyana, non-governmental organizations, and the private sector to make important strides in the fight against crime. The CBSI goal is to channel at-risk youth to participate in the formal economy and give young people in Guyana greater opportunities and a better future.

This project is designed to provide effective approaches to reducing crime and violence in several ways:

- First, we are focusing on groups of people in society who are the principal victims and perpetrators of violent crime.

Statistics in Guyana and elsewhere clearly show that young people make up the cohort in the population that disproportionately experiences the greatest percentage of criminal acts.

- Second, the project emphasizes the development of approaches that can be shared with all organizations that seek to work with at-risk youth. An array of training materials, evaluation methodologies, and other background information will be shared with those trying to reach out and stem criminal activities or potential criminal activity by Guyanese youth. Our primary focus today is on training coaches to work with at-risk youth. This focus includes coaching; a work readiness curriculum, which was adapted with the involvement of the Government of Guyana, NGOs, and private sector; and, an entrepreneurship curriculum, developed in in collaboration with Guyana Youth Business Trust.
- A third focus of the project is to secure the integral involvement of key ministries' in project outcomes. Without the support and commitment of the relevant ministries, the SKYE project will not be able to achieve its desired results in terms of addressing the needs of at-risk youth and reducing

criminal activity and behavior. The Government of Guyana has already made a major commitment to youth training through its various ministries. The SKYE effort is designed to complement these impressive efforts and improve the overall systems in place to support youth. It seeks to do this through:

- A work readiness curriculum based on and adapted to the Guyanese situation;
- Training-of-Trainers (ToT) focused on coaches; methodologies for selecting and recruiting coaches; and evaluation methodologies to monitor achievement of objectives and results.

We greatly appreciate the continued resolve of the government and NGOs to work with the project in realizing these goals of reaching out to and supporting at-risk youth to gain the skills they need to succeed and prosper.

I wish to thank everyone here for coming together this morning to inaugurate and participate in this SKYE activity. I hope that we will continue to strengthen this partnership under the Caribbean Basin Security Initiative and reinforce our shared commitment to support alternatives for at-risk youth that are personally fulfilling and contribute to Guyana's future development and economic growth.

Thank you.